

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 have been examined. Claims 1, 2, 6-8, 10 and 14-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), and claims 3, 9, 11-13 and 18-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 4 and 5 contain allowable subject matter.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,647,208 to Kirby (“Kirby”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 6-8, 10 and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Kirby.

A. Claim 1

Applicant has incorporated the allowable subject matter of claim 4 into claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the Kirby reference.

B. Claims 2, 6-8, 10 and 14-17

Since claims 2, 6-8, 10 and 14-17 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Kirby

The Examiner has rejected claims 9 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Kirby. However, since claims 9 and 11-13 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Kirby and U.S. Patent No. 6,856,600 to Russell (“Russell”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 3 and 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kirby in view of Russell. However, since claims 3 and 18-21 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

IV. Allowable Subject Matter

As set forth above, the Examiner has indicated that claims 4 and 5 contain allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, Applicant has incorporated claim 4 into claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the Application is now in condition for allowance.

V. Conclusion

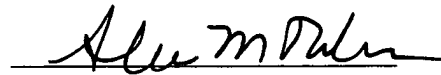
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 09/934,579

Attorney Docket No.: Q65960

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison M. Tulino
Registration No. 48,294

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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